



Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuges

Comprehensive Conservation Plan Planning Update 1



Harbor seals hauled out on Crook Point, part of the Oregon Islands Refuge. Photo: David Ledig, USFWS.

Greetings

The Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex has initiated a planning process called “Comprehensive Conservation Planning” to review and plan for long term management of wildlife, habitat, and public use activities on Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuges (Refuges).

Over the next year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will be requesting input from Tribes, interested agencies, elected officials, the public, and organizations regarding their interests, concerns, and viewpoints about Refuge management issues. This information will be helpful in the development of the Refuges’ Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). This is the first in a series of planning updates to keep you informed and invite your participation in the planning process.

Help Us Plan for the Future

As the Service conducts the CCP planning process, we are providing the opportunity to look at our wildlife and habitat management and public programs from fresh perspectives. The original purposes of the Refuges will remain unchanged from when the areas were set aside to protect habitat for wildlife and, in some locations, to provide for wildlife dependent recreation consistent with wildlife needs. However, we have a chance to review each of our management programs, and this is where your insights and observations are needed, to facilitate a more complete and thoughtful process.

Please share your ideas with us by attending upcoming public meetings (see page 3) or by submitting written comments to the Refuge (see page 4 for contact information).

Your participation is critical to the success of this effort and we want to hear from you!

National Wildlife Refuge System

Refuges are places where wildlife comes first. The National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) comprises the world’s largest collection of lands set aside specifically for wildlife and provides important habitat for native plants and animals. The Refuge System is administered by the Department of the Interior’s U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the nation’s fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for the benefit of the American people. —▷

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is:

“To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

What is Comprehensive Conservation Planning?

A CCP is a 15-year plan that guides a refuge’s management decisions and identifies long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving the purposes for which the refuge was established.

During the CCP planning process for the Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, and Three Arch

Rocks National Wildlife Refuges, many elements will be considered, including wildlife and habitat protection and management, and public use opportunities. Public and agency input during the planning process is essential.

The CCP for the Refuges will describe the purposes and desired conditions for the Refuges and the long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for fulfilling the purposes and achieving those conditions.

Refuges Overview

The **Cape Meares Refuge** is located on the Oregon coast between Tillamook Bay and Netarts Bay. It was established in 1938 through the acquisition of excess lands from the U.S. Coast Guard. The Refuge is comprised of two units separated by Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint, which is managed by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

The Cape Meares Refuge includes coastal cliffs, rock outcroppings and an old-growth forest dominated by Sitka spruce and western hemlock.

Management programs at Cape Meares Refuge are primarily focused on preserving the old growth forest, maintaining the integrity of a Research Natural Area, protecting seabird nesting colonies, protecting nesting sites for peregrine falcons and bald eagles, and providing opportunities for the public to learn about wildlife resources through wildlife viewing and interpretation on adjacent OPRD lands.

Public use on the Cape Meares Refuge is managed cooperatively

by the OPRD and the Service through a Memorandum of Agreement.

The **Oregon Islands Refuge** spans 320 miles of the Oregon coast, and includes 1,853 rocks, islands, and reefs, and two headlands—Coquille Point in Coos County, and Crook Point in Curry County.

In 1970, 1978, and 1996, the rocks, islands, and reefs within the Refuge were designated wilderness, with the exception of privately-owned Tillamook Rock. The rocks, reefs, and islands of Oregon Islands Refuge were acquired to serve as a refuge and breeding ground for birds and marine mammals, and are closed to all public use.

The Coquille Point headland was acquired in 1991, to provide a buffer zone between several of the Refuge’s offshore islands and mainland development, to protect a bluff zone for the wildlife that depend on it, and to provide an excellent opportunity for wildlife observation. The Crook Point headland was acquired in 2000 to provide

permanent protection to one of the few remaining undisturbed headlands on the Oregon coast, resulting in increased protection for major nearshore seabird breeding colonies and pinniped pupping and haulout sites within the Oregon Islands Refuge. Unique geological formations and rare plants on the mainland are also protected within the Refuge.

The **Three Arch Rocks Refuge** is located a half-mile west of the town of Oceanside, Oregon, and includes nine rocks and islands encompassing 15 acres of seabird and marine mammal habitat. The Refuge was established in 1907 and was accorded Wilderness status in 1970.

The Refuge is closed to public use to protect seabirds, marine mammals, and their habitats from human disturbance. A seasonal closure of the waters within 500 feet of the Refuge is enforced yearly from May 1 through September 15. However, interpretation, wildlife photography and observation of the Three Arch Rocks Refuge are allowed off site at both Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint and from Oceanside Beach State Recreation Area.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Overview of Cape Meares, Oregon Islands, and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuges

The Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge includes all rocks, reefs and islands (more than 1800) along the Oregon coast above the mean high water line except Chiefs Island and Three Arch Rocks NWR. Coquille Point and Crook Point Units are part of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

PACIFIC OCEAN

Tillamook Rock

Haystack Rock

Three Arch Rocks NWR

Yaquina Head Rocks

Shell Island

Face Rock

Orford Reef

Rogue Reef

Goat Island

WASHINGTON

ASTORIA

CANNON BEACH

Cape Meares NWR

TILLAMOOK

LINCOLN CITY

NEWPORT

FLORENCE

COOS BAY

BANDON

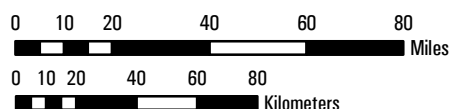
Coquille Point Unit

PORT ORFORD

GOLD BEACH

BROOKINGS

CALIFORNIA



Preliminary Issues to be Considered

During development of the CCP, a range of alternative management approaches will be explored and evaluated, including current management practices. Preliminary issues, concerns, and opportunities that may be addressed in the CCP are briefly summarized in the following paragraphs. Additional issues will be identified during public involvement.

During the CCP planning process the Service will analyze methods for protecting the resources of Cape Meares Refuge in the long term, while continuing to provide quality opportunities for wildlife dependent recreation in partnership with OPRD, volunteers, and a Friends group.

At Oregon Islands and Three Arch Rocks Refuges, the Service will identify and consider a wide range of techniques and partnerships in the CCP for protection

of the sensitive and irreplaceable wildlife, habitat, and cultural resources within the Refuges.

Opportunities for the public to enjoy the Refuges will be examined. The Service will evaluate the management and extensive inventory, monitoring, and research needs of the Refuges.

You are invited to the first Open House Public Meetings

Five public open house meetings will be held in November 2006. The public open house meetings will be held on week nights between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. A brief presentation will be given at the beginning of each meeting. Addresses and dates for the meetings follow.

- Wednesday, November 1, 2006
Newport High School
Boone Center Room
322 NE Eads St.
Newport, Oregon (Lincoln County)
- Tuesday, November 2, 2006
Oceanside Community Center
1550 Pacific St.
Oceanside, Oregon (Tillamook County)
- Wednesday, November 8, 2006
Cannon Beach Elementary School gym
268 Beaver St.
Cannon Beach, Oregon (Clatsop County)
- Tuesday, November 14, 2006
Brookings High School cafeteria
564 Fern St.
Brookings, Oregon (Curry County)
- Wednesday, November 15, 2006
Bandon High School cafeteria
550 Ninth Street SW
Bandon, Oregon (Coos County)

Right: Peregrine falcon with chicks. Above: Brown Pelicans.
Photos: USFWS.



Tentative Planning Study Schedule

Planning Step	Target Date
Planning Update 1 issued.....	October 2006
Public Meetings.....	November 2006
Public Review/Comment on Draft CCP.....	June 2008
Final CCP.....	December 2008

Schedule dates are tentative and subject to change as the planning process progresses.

How Do I Contact the Service or Provide Comments?

Send comments to or obtain information on the National Wildlife Refuges from:

Roy W. Lowe, Project Leader
Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex
2127 SE Marine Science Drive
Newport, Oregon 97365-5258

Phone: (541) 867-4550

Fax: (541) 867-4551

E-mail: oregoncoastCCP@fws.gov

Web: www.fws.gov/oregoncoast

For information on the CCP planning process contact:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Ben Harrison, Chief,
Branch of Refuge Planning
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

Phone: (503) 231-2235 or

Toll free: (877) 312-1751

Fax: (503) 231-6187

If you would like to be removed from the CCP mailing list, please contact us with your full name and address.



*U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System
Division of Planning and Visitor Services
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232*

Address correction requested



*In this issue:
What natural
resource issues are
important to you?
Your comments are
requested on the
long term
management of the
Cape Meares,
Oregon Islands,
and Three Arch
Rocks National
Wildlife Refuges.*